

Painting and Sculpture in Canada

By

M. O. HAMMOND



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PAINTING AND SCULPTURE
IN CANADA



Courtesy Toronto Art Gallery

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Painting and Sculpture in Canada

By

M. O. HAMMOND

Author of *Canadian Footprints, Confederation and Its Leaders,*
and *The Confederation Story*

ILLUSTRATED WITH FRONTISPIÈCE
AND PORTRAITS



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PAINTING AND SCULPTURE IN CANADA

WHEN Louis Jobin, the patriarchal wood carver of Sainte Anne de Beaupré, passed away, in 1928, at the age of eighty-six, he severed a link which united primitive and modern art in Canada. Through his long life he had created figures in wood, the last of a distinguished line of artists in their archaic field. Ancient *Calvaires* beside Quebec highways, fading wooden Indians in front of cigar stores, rare figure-heads on sailing ships, crumbling apostles on the façades of churches, as at Sainte Famille, Island of Orleans—these are relics of the wood carving age in Canadian art, that may be found by diligent search.

Jobin's own life spanned the developing years of the newer expression in Canada, the art of painting. We may pass over the comparatively modern efforts of the Indians, visible in decorative totem poles, carvings in bone, shell and ivory, as well as the painted ceremonial faces of the red men, and interesting designs in bead-work and colour. We

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shall also ignore the efforts of educated Frenchmen in the days of New France, and the paintings, sketches and engravings by transient artists immediately after the Conquest. If art in Canada lacked adequate support almost down to the relatively fat times of to-day, how much less could it thrive in the era of the explorer and the *coureur-de-bois*?

Painting in Canada, whose utmost span thus far is little more than a century, has revolved round some half-dozen organizations, mainly since Confederation. These were, the Art Association of Montreal, incorporated in 1860; the Society of Canadian Artists, formed at Montreal, in 1867; the Ontario Society of Artists, founded at Toronto, in 1872; the Royal Canadian Academy, launched at Ottawa, in 1880, and holding annual exhibitions alternately at Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto; the Canadian Art Club, formed by a group of senior painters and sculptors at Toronto, in 1908; and the Group of Seven, dating from 1920. Halifax, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver have been more recently favoured with the forma-

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tion of local art bodies, and have launched their own art galleries. The Montreal Art Association, the National Gallery at Ottawa, and the Toronto Art Gallery, with large, beautiful buildings, and important permanent collections, have stimulated public interest in their cities and beyond, while the Provincial Government has erected a Museum at Quebec, for which important Canadian work has been purchased.

Before any of these bodies were formed there had been a few painters at work in Canada, mainly artists from Europe, who came fully trained and never lost the influence of early environment. They sometimes painted Canadian landscapes which recalled the New Forest or the Burnham Beeches rather than the Laurentians or Muskoka. The revulsion came since the World War, when a number of men undertook to paint a Canada of vigorous landscapes, brilliant sunlight and the glowing colours of the seasons that actually belong to the Dominion. "The Jack Pine," by Tom Thomson, with its emphasis on rugged pattern, established the new mode in Canadian landscape.

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I. Early Emigré Artists

For several decades in the early creation of Canadian art there were no native painters. There was no impulse to paint, no school in which to study, and few buyers when the work was done. Occasional wandering painters arrived, pausing a while; others came and made Canada their home.

Paul Kane, one of the first of these, was an Irishman whose father came to Toronto about 1818, and opened a wine shop. The youth travelled and studied art for four years in Europe, chiefly in Italy, returning in 1845. Interested in Indian life, due to his contact with the Mississaugas around Toronto in boyhood, Kane spent three years in the North and West of Canada, following the Indians and painting them in their lodges, hunting buffaloes with them, and living their primitive life generally. The result was a large collection of pictures, often fantastic in drawing, but usually faithful in dramatic quality, and now of permanent value as records of aboriginal life. Many of these pictures are possessed by the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.

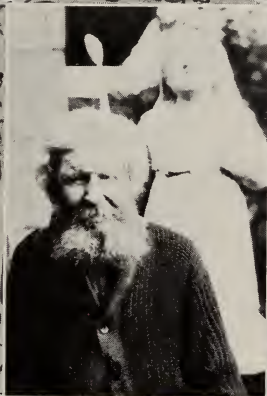
At about the same period, Canada became the home of another wanderer, Cornelius



DANIEL FOWLER



G. T. BERTHON



LOUIS JOBIN



OTTO JACOBI



C. KRIEGHOFF

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Krieghoff, a native of Dusseldorf, who had lived in Florida for a time. He came to visit a brother in Toronto and, in 1853, settled at Quebec. He mingled with the officers of the garrison, and eked out an existence by painting many small pictures for them. Krieghoff was a careful draughtsman and usually painted little compositions and in fine detail. His pictures are enhanced in interest and value by the rich humour he displayed in recording *habitant* life. For this Krieghoff has been called "the Canadian Hogarth." Equally he might be termed a troubadour, because of his itinerant life and his accomplishments in languages and music.

Another pioneer, with still a different background, was George T. Berthon, a native of France, trained in Paris, whose father was an artist and protégé of Napoleon. He came to Toronto, in 1841, and before his death, in 1892, had made many portraits. Canada had few private art patrons in those days, and making portraits of statesmen, judges and other officials, was the painters' principal source of revenue. Osgoode Hall has many of Berthon's works, and time has not weakened their importance either as records or objects of art. Occasionally

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Berthon painted women from contemporary society. One of these pictures emerged in Toronto, in 1912, when visitors to a loan collection saw "The Three Miss Robinsons," a charming group of girls in ringlets and early Victorian costumes, members of a distinguished Toronto family.

During this formative stage in Canadian development, while politicians struggled over forms of government, a handful of painters strove to nurse their profession to a point of enduring life. Toronto witnessed its first art exhibition, in 1834, at the old Parliament Building on Front Street. The Toronto Society of Art and the Montreal Society of Artists were formed in 1847, and loan exhibitions were held by both from time to time.

Antoine Plamondon, who was born at Quebec, in 1802, was a maker of portraits and church decorations in his Province almost to his death, in 1895. Theophile Hamel, another Quebec painter of the same period, was so beloved in youth that his friends prolonged his studies in Europe, in the forties, by a purse of over \$2,000. He lived in Toronto for a time and painted many official portraits.

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This period brought to Canada several painters trained in Europe, who endured the discouragements of pioneering days. Daniel Fowler was born in England in 1810, and learned to paint there and on the Continent. He came to Canada in 1843 for his health, settling on a farm on Amherst Island, near Kingston. He regained his health but lost the impulse to paint until he revisited England in 1857. Thereafter his output was large and diversified, his pictures, mainly landscapes and still life, being marked by vigour and colour. At the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition in 1876 he was awarded a bronze medal for a painting of hollyhocks.

Otto R. Jacobi was court painter to the Grand Duke of Nassau before leaving his native Prussia. He located in Canada, in 1860, and became a leading landscapist. Jacobi painted with infinite detail the beauties of the Canadian Northland, sometimes with a touch of humour, as in "Breaking Camp," leaving a later generation to rediscover the same field and record it by a vastly different technique.

Arriving from England a little later, in 1871, already a man of middle age, G.

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Harlow White continued the Jacobi tradition from his bush farm near Lake Simcoe. During five years' residence he made hundreds of sketches which, as part of the J. Ross Robertson Collection, in the Toronto Public Library, are of historical and artistic importance. From a backwoods farm in Huron County, William Nichol Cresswell, another Englishman, pursued his art in isolation, proving again the patient perseverance of the cultured Briton. John Bellsmith, also born and educated in England, came to Montreal, in 1866, and was the first President of the Society of Canadian Artists. In 1927 there was held in the former Toronto studio of his son, F. M. Bellsmith, an exhibition of paintings by four generations of the family.

Nova Scotia, as the oldest seat of English culture in Canada, was the home early in the nineteenth century of several artists from Europe who left an important legacy of portraits. The most eminent of these was Robert Field, a skilful English craftsman, who, during ten years' residence in Halifax, from 1808 to 1818, completed probably one hundred and fifty portraits. Among his best are the paintings of Sir George Prevost, Sir John Coape Sherbrooke, Sir John Went-

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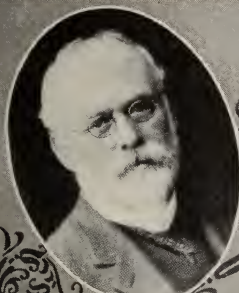
worth, and Bishop Charles Inglis, the latter finding a permanent place in the National Portrait Gallery, London. William Valentine, another Englishman, lived in Halifax from 1818 until his death in 1849 and painted many prominent persons. A self-portrait and a portrait of Hon. S. G. W. Archibald are specially treasured for their simplicity and dignity and their reflection of the eighteenth-century tradition of English art.

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II. Hints of a Native Art

The middle of the century found in Canada, quite unknown to each other, a scattered group of youths who were to play a large part in the later organization of art in the Dominion on a permanent basis. Some of the early painters were transients; all were trained in Europe. Many years passed before Canada was to educate her own artists.

John A. Fraser, brilliant but temperamental, was a key man in this early development. He came from England, in 1860, a trained artist, and settled in the Eastern Townships. Times were hard, and sometimes he painted kitchen chairs, waggons and "cutters" to sup-



ROBT. HARRIS



PAUL PEEL



L. R. O'BRIEN



BLAIR BRUCL



J. A. FRASER

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port the family. William Notman, a leading photographer in Montreal, invited Fraser to assist in his studio by colouring photographs, and, in 1867, sent him to manage the Toronto branch. From the Notman & Fraser studios, there graduated several talented painters, including Henry Sandham, Robert F. Gagen, John Hammond and McGillivray Knowles. Mr. Gagen had received previous lessons from Cresswell, his neighbour on a Huron County farm. Gagen, in turn, gave first instruction in painting to Horatio Walker, in Toronto.



III. The Ontario Society of Artists

Fraser, however, gave rein to his restless spirit by organizing his contemporaries for their own advancement, first in the Society of Canadian Artists in Montreal (1867), and later in the Ontario Society of Artists in Toronto (1872). Already an atmosphere of art consciousness and controversy had been fostered in Toronto by George Gilbert, an Australian, teacher of art at the Bishop Strachan School, and James Spooner, who kept a combined tobacco shop, picture gallery

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and dog kennel on King Street. Here the painters and young bloods met, and it was a natural transition to assemble at the home of John A. Fraser, 28 Gould Street, and discuss a new society. This meeting was held on June 25, 1872, and from it grew the Ontario Society of Artists, which has continued ever since, holding annual exhibitions in Toronto, offering hospitality alike to young and old, ever recruiting men and women of talent and fostering art education as well as a spirit of appreciation.

This foundation meeting was attended by Charles S. Millard, T. Mower Martin, James Hoch, Marmaduke Matthews, J. W. Bridgeman and Robert F. Gagen. Mr. Martin alone survives, in 1930, still vigorous at ninety-two, equally enthusiastic over his latest landscape, or his much-loved garden on the outskirts of Toronto.

As the century passed into its last quarter there came a new period in art development. A measure of official recognition had arrived. Education was more widely diffused, native painters were more freely recognized and their merits generally admitted. Montreal and Toronto, as the largest cities, had an increasing number of well-to-do families with

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comfortable homes. Foreign travel widened culture and spread a knowledge of art. A sympathetic atmosphere was being slowly created.



IV. The Royal Canadian Academy

There has been approximately a century of painting in Canada, from the days of Kane, Krieghoff and Berthon, to the present, and half way down that century occurred, in 1880, the organization of the Royal Canadian Academy, the jubilee of whose launching is being observed in this year of 1930.

The Academy is not without critics, for no loosely linked body of creative workers can escape contention any more than it can avoid tendencies toward grooves and cliques. Progress in Canadian painting and sculpture, however, has been mainly connected with the handful of men and women who, in succeeding generations, have comprised the Royal Canadian Academy, and, through that membership, have promoted collateral enterprises and bodies for a related purpose.

One of these is the National Gallery of Canada, also born in 1880, whose collection

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of native and foreign art steadily grows. Through loan exhibitions, sent to all parts of the Dominion, it spreads the leaven of beauty and kindles thousands who are hungry for intellectual refreshment. A worthy collection of art by contemporaries and old masters is being assembled under the direction of Mr. Eric Brown, and the circulation of loaned pictures from Ottawa, in cities and towns, attests an enlarging usefulness for the National Gallery, which possesses the most complete collection of Canadian art in existence.

Lord Dufferin, in closing a brilliant régime as Governor-General, had left a thought for his successor which was as a grain of mustard seed. The outcome was the promotion by the Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise, a daughter of Queen Victoria, of a Canadian Academy of Arts, founded broadly on the lines of the Royal Academy. It was to comprise not only painters, but architects, designers, engravers and sculptors as well. Naturally painters have dominated the membership, but architects have played an important part, while sculptors and designers have been represented in lesser numbers. The nucleus of a National Gallery was

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secured by arranging that each Academician painter should contribute a picture on his election.

It was characteristic of the era of doubt and provincialism in which the Academy was born that its value was scouted in some quarters. Lord Lorne, in his opening address, referred, with delicate irony, to critics who said that the enterprise would be more suitable in 1980 than in 1880:

Art will no doubt be in vigorous life in Canada a century hence; but, on the other hand, we must remember that at that time these gentle critics may have disappeared from the scene, and they will themselves allow that it is for the benefit of the Academy that it should begin its existence while still subject to their own friendly supervision.

If there were doubters and scorers, they must have retired into the background, for the opening of the first Academy exhibition in Ottawa, on March 5, 1880, was a brilliant occasion. The scene was the Clarendon Hotel building, loaned by the Canadian Government, and the gracious address of the Marquis of Lorne met suitable reply in the diplomatic finesse of Lucius R. O'Brien, the first President, and in the Gallic eloquence of Napoleon Bourassa, vice-Presi-

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dent. A few wealthy Ottawa gentlemen of taste enhanced the exhibition with loans from their own possessions, and the later intimate relationship of Canadian art to industry was heralded by a collection of industrial drawings. Those who consider the subsequent opening of schools of art in Montreal, Toronto, Halifax, Winnipeg, Vancouver and elsewhere, may appreciate the foresight of the founders of the Academy.

English manufacture [said Lord Lorne in alluding to industrial art then shown], as you know, has become famous for its durability, French manufacture for its beauty and workmanship, and here, where we have a people sprung from both races, we should be able to combine these excellences, so that Canadian manufacture may hold a high place in the markets of the world.

The charter members of the Royal Canadian Academy, as the organization was soon called, were: Painters—Napoleon Bourassa, W. N. Cresswell, A. Allan Edson, Daniel Fowler, John A. Fraser, James Griffiths, Robert Harris, Eugène Hamel, T. Mower Martin, Lucius R. O'Brien, William Raphael, Henry Sandham, and Mrs. Charlotte M. B. Schreiber; Architects—J. W. Hopkins, H. Langley, T. S. Scott, James Smith and W. G. Storm; Sculptor—F. C. Van Luppen.

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The opening exhibition of the Academy attracted a general participation from the struggling painters of the day. One of these was a young man who, self-taught, was labouring with his brushes in the village of Doon, beside the Grand River, in Ontario. This was Homer Watson, who is still an active painter in 1930. Mr. Watson had persevered against discouragements, particularly the counsel of a local grocer who sought him as a clerk. The youth sent a picture called "The Pioneer Mill," to the first Academy exhibition. Much to his astonishment, it was not only hung, but was bought by the Princess Louise for \$300. During the subsequent half-century, Mr. Watson has become recognized as the foremost interpreter of the pioneer landscapes and forests of Ontario.

The first President of the Academy, Lucius R. O'Brien, was a member of an Ontario family distinguished in law and politics. Though trained a civil engineer, his reputation rests upon his delicate water colours of the Canadian landscape, and his promotion of native art in circles of refinement and wealth when it needed that support. Mr. O'Brien did much to popularize

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the rugged beauty of Canada through his illustrations for *Picturesque Canada*, a large pictorial work published in 1882.



V. *The Emergence of a National Art*

There now emerged a group of painters who lifted their art to something like a national profession. Robert Harris, a native of Wales, who spent his early years in Prince Edward Island and received art training in Europe, took a position of leadership, and from 1893 to 1906 was President of the Academy. From his Montreal studio there went forth a long succession of portraits of eminent Canadians. He also created the celebrated group known as "The Fathers of Confederation," comprising the members of the Quebec Conference of 1864, which became, through reproductions, the best-known painting in the Dominion. After its destruction in the Parliament Buildings fire at Ottawa, in 1916, it was repainted in replica by Frederick Challenger for the Ontario Parliament Buildings, and the Macdonald Hotel, Edmonton, respectively.

The high place of Harris in Canadian art

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was attested by the opening, in 1930, of the Harris Memorial Gallery in Charlottetown, P.E.I., in his honour. Though best known for his portraits, he turned occasionally to landscapes and figure studies, while "The School Trustees," in the National Gallery, Ottawa, is an amusing transcript from pioneer Canadian life. Harris was for a time Principal of the Ontario School of Art, at Toronto, where he had as pupils George A. Reid, Ernest Thompson Seton and Sydney Strickland Tully. At his death, in 1919, he was the dean of Canadian painters.

European schools were now claiming many Canadian art students, a condition which persisted until interrupted by the World War in 1914. Paul Peel, of London; Blair Bruce, of Hamilton; Florence Carlyle, of Woodstock, Ont.; William Brymner, Maurice Cullen and J. W. Morrice, of Montreal; Franklin Brownell, of Ottawa; George A. Reid, of Wingham; Wyatt Eaton, of the Eastern Townships; and McGillivray Knowles, of Toronto, were among the brilliant coterie who sought abroad the best art education then available. A. Allan Edson had already returned from Paris, and was

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established as a skilled landscapist. The schools of Europe were divided on the merits of Impressionism, then sweeping France, and the Canadian students did not escape the controversy.

Peel and Bruce immediately and permanently felt the Continental influence and spent the rest of their lives abroad, chiefly in Paris. Though both resisted the influence of Impressionism, they won distinction, which has increased since their death. Peel's most celebrated work, "After the Bath," showing his two small children drying themselves before an open fire, was purchased by the Hungarian Government. After long years in Europe it was bought by friends in London, Ont., in 1922, finding a place, in 1930, in the R. S. McLaughlin collection at Oshawa, Ont.

Blair Bruce became a painter of power and versatility. Some of his best work is found in the National Gallery of Canada and in the civic gallery of Hamilton. One of his greatest pictures, "Bathers, Mediterranean," was purchased in 1930, by T. B. Macaulay, of Montreal, a boyhood friend, for the Hamilton collection. Though Bruce spent many years abroad, he left important impressions

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of Canadian life. One of these, "The Smiths," in the National collection at Ottawa, shows waggon-makers "setting" a tire, their lithe, tense bodies strained at an acute moment of the process. "The Walker of the Snow" preserves in pictorial form the romantic legend of a poem under the same title by Charles Dawson Shanly.

Florence Carlyle, who was a grand-niece of Thomas Carlyle, the British historian and philosopher, enjoyed favour for her warm, friendly pictures of domestic interiors, always executed with breadth and richness of colour. "The Tiff," owned by the Ontario Government, is a popular example of her work. Her later years were spent in England, where she died in 1923.

Another artist of this period was George A. Reid, who, fresh from the schools of Philadelphia and Paris, returned to the Lake Huron country of his birth, and painted what became economic as well as human and pictorial documents. "Mortgaging the Homestead" (1890), was a sad but truthful commentary on financial conditions in Canadian agriculture, while "The Clock Cleaner" brought a gleam of humour to the record of a drab age. Mr. Reid, who was President

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of the Academy from 1906 to 1909, leaned naturally to teaching, and from 1912 to 1929 was Principal of the Ontario College of Art. He painted landscapes often with poetic feeling and frequently turned with enthusiasm to mural decorations with a historical background, as in the series done for the Jarvis Collegiate in Toronto.

Robert Holmes brought another note into the art of the day, by creating over many years, a large collection of water colours of wild flowers in their natural settings in the woods of Ontario. While a teacher of drawing at Upper Canada College, he sought a distinctly Canadian theme in design. He turned to the wild flowers, and as a consequence the beauties of the shy hepatica, the blushing columbine and the elusive arbutus, which bloom to-day and perish to-morrow, are preserved for the pleasure of busy, materialistic generations.

J. W. Morrice followed largely the course of Bruce and Peel. He spurned the life of a lawyer planned by his father, a Montreal merchant, and found happiness in the studios and boulevards of Paris. He was a cosmopolitan, a friend of Whistler, at home in Paris, Venice or Algiers. He adopted the

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Whistler manner, and in his day was the best-known Canadian painter in Europe. Examples of his work are found in London, Paris, Lyons, Nantes, Odessa, Washington, Philadelphia, Montreal, Ottawa and other cities.

The return of these artists from Continental schools, toward the end of the nineteenth century, stimulated an atmosphere of the "Latin Quarter" in the larger Canadian cities. Montreal had its studios on Beaver Hall Hill, among the old houses which seem yet to recall the pompous Northwest Fur Company barons. In Toronto, Adelaide and Victoria Streets contained attic studios, where struggling young men sought to keep body and soul together by selling pictures to an unresponsive public.

An enterprise which in a modest way pointed to a Canadian national art of the future, was the publication annually for ten years, commencing in 1893, of the Art Students' League Calendar. A group of young artists collaborated and made drawings with care and brilliance, of various phases of Canadian life, founded, it is true on relatively limited knowledge, but indicating an awakening national consciousness.

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Copies of this Calendar have become treasured items of Canadiana, significant of an unfolding talent and of the pointing of the artists' interest north instead of east. Among the active members of the League were: W. J. Thomson, David F. Thomson, William Bengough and John Cotton, who later lived in the United States; Frederick Challener, Owen Staples, W. W. Alexander, W. D. Blatchly, F. H. Brigden, C. W. Jefferys, and D. A. McKellar.

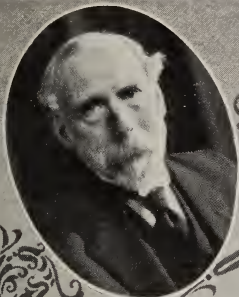
William Cruikshank, an eccentric Scotsman with extraordinary powers in drawing and exceptional qualities as a teacher, painted in Toronto a few valuable pictures of pioneer life. When a young man he did important work as an illustrator in Canadian periodicals. F. M. Bellsmith, who never forgot the influence of Dickens and his landmarks and characters in England, did much to introduce to Canadians the massive grandeur of the Rockies. Robert F. Gagen and W. M. Cutts found joy in painting the surf of the Atlantic as it breaks on a rocky coast. Mr. Gagen, true to the influences of his English birth, frequently visited the Atlantic coast, and carried into a serene age an astonishing vigour of painting and

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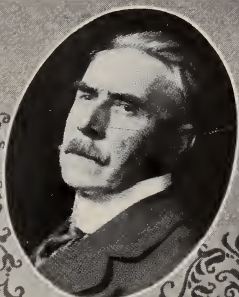
buoyancy of spirit. From 1889 to his sudden death in 1926, as Secretary of the Ontario Society of Artists, he exercised considerable influence in the discovery and encouragement of younger painters.

In 1876 there came to Canada from Australia, E. Wyly Grier, a lad of fourteen years, who, as President of the Academy in 1930, presented to the Princess Louise in England the felicitations of the society she promoted fifty years earlier. After a thorough training in London and Paris, he returned to Toronto in 1890, and launched upon a distinguished career in portrait painting. He is sure in drawing, faithful in likeness and keen in characterization. While his technique is conservative, his work is often daring in colour and original in arrangement and background. Among his best works are portraits of Sir Edmund Walker, Edward Blake and Sir Joseph Flavelle.

Frederick Challener, though a painter of luminous figures, has followed mainly the career of a mural artist. Numerous important hotels and theatres are enriched by his work, revealing his merits as a colourist, and brightened by a high imaginative quality.



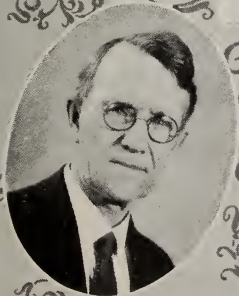
HOMER WATSON



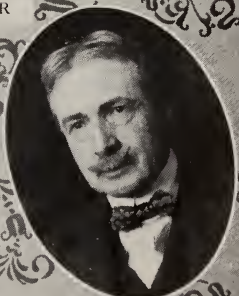
C. W. JEFFERYS



WYLY GRIER



F. CHALLENGER



C. WILLIAMSON

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His landscapes are invested with idealism and romance, glamour and an ethereal quality as of some creation of France during the eighteenth century. C. W. Jefferys, after some years as a newspaper artist in New York, became an early interpreter of the landscape of Northern and Western Canada, but made his principal life-work the illustration of Canadian history, of which he has an uncanny mastery. He diverted later to mural decorations with historical background, which he paints with spaciousness and simplicity. Owen Staples likewise followed historical subjects, with an occasional excursion into landscape. For several years his chief work was the development of the J. Ross Robertson collection of historical pictures in Toronto. McGillivray Knowles was one of the earliest Ontario painters to realize the riches of French-Canadian *motifs*, which he has rendered with beauty and vigour and always an appreciation of the Continental flavour which France bequeathed to her old colony in the New World.

J. W. L. Forster has pursued a long and successful career as a portraitist, the high lights of which he has recorded in his

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engaging book of memoirs, *Under the Studio Light*. C. M. Manly painted landscapes in water colour and excelled as a teacher, thereby exerting a considerable influence upon younger painters in Ontario.

Montreal painters of this period included men of later eminence. Edmond Dyonnet, a native of France, had done distinguished work in portraits and figures, but, as time passed, he became better known as a teacher and as Secretary of the Academy. William Brymner, President of the Academy from 1906 to 1918, was another teacher of wide influence, but also a powerful painter in landscapes, marines and figures. He was one of the earliest painters to appreciate the possibilities of the Rocky Mountains. Mr. Brymner exerted a broad and lasting influence on the art of his city through his organizing ability and by the work later carried on by his pupils, including Clarence A. Gagnon, Edwin H. Holgate and Emily Coonan.

Maurice Cullen returned from Paris in 1896 and settled down as a painter of the French-Canadian landscape. He soon excelled in rendering snow, his pictures suggesting the brilliance, coldness and crispness

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of the Canadian winter. Truth is ensured for his records by toilsome hours of sketching in rigorous outdoors. A. Suzor Coté had entered on a long career in painting and sculpture, giving in both mediums dignity and great beauty to the scenes and traditions of *habitant* life. Whether he painted "The Landing of Jacques Cartier," or "The Blessing of the Sugar Maples," the strength and sympathy of his conscientious effort was always apparent.

G. Horne Russell was rising to notice by marines and portraits, earning the Presidency of the Academy from 1922 to 1926. Joseph C. Franchère carried into his portraits something of the mellowness of the old masters. J. M. Barnsley, whose later life was clouded by ill health, left a heritage of beautiful landscapes. Alphonse Jongers, a native of France, brought a strong note in portraiture during successive lengthy residences in Montreal. Henry Sandham painted from Canadian life and history with brilliant colour and dramatic effect. Later he worked in New York, as did also Wyatt Eaton, both winning high recognition for portraits. J. Colin Forbes and A. Dickson Patterson were also notable in the portrait field, Mr. Forbes

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for his picture of W. E. Gladstone, and Mr. Patterson for a vibrant likeness of Sir John A. Macdonald. John Hammond, of New Brunswick, rendered landscapes with much poetic feeling. C. E. Moss and Franklin Brownell were early members of a notable Ottawa group, the former working chiefly in portraits, and being also a teacher. Mr. Brownell's mellow landscapes have marked individuality and warmth. Charles E. Huot, of Quebec, worked tirelessly until his death, in 1930, and enriched the Quebec Parliament Buildings by mural decorations based on Canadian history.



VI. The Canadian Art Club

National consciousness made a fresh impression in the field of the painters, in 1908, when the Canadian Art Club was formed in Toronto. Several painters and sculptors, who were better known in Europe and the United States than in their native country, lent their co-operation, and an impressive commencement was made by the organization. During its short lifetime of seven years the Art Club, through its exhi-

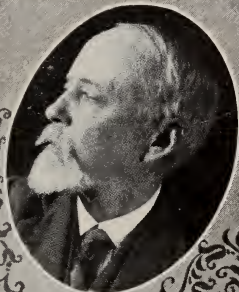
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bitions, exerted a considerable influence on public opinion, and quickened the activities of the Ontario Society of Artists. The leading spirits in the organization were: Horatio Walker, Homer Watson, Curtis Williamson, Archibald Browne, Edmund Morris, Walter S. Allward, A. Phimister Proctor, William Brymner and W. E. Atkinson.

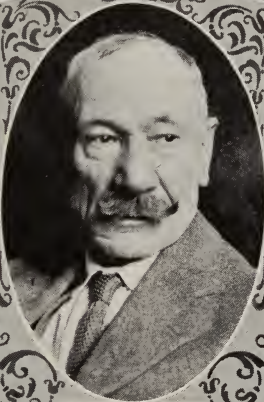
At the Art Club's second exhibition, in 1909, all visitors experienced a thrill from "Ploughing—The First Gleam," a massive and magnificent work by Horatio Walker, which had already won gold medals at the Buffalo and St. Louis Expositions. In 1929, it was purchased for the Province of Quebec Museum. The theme was sunrise on an Island of Orleans hillside farm, where, in dark masses and rosy lights, four oxen, accompanied by two men, were hauling a plough in the warm glow of dawn. Another major work by Mr. Walker, "Oxen Drinking," had been purchased by the National Gallery of Canada, in 1909, for \$12,000. Both pictures indicate the genius of this artist in the interpretation of rural Quebec, and the romance and poetry with which he has invested its life. Though sometimes called "the Canadian Millet," Walker paints



C. A. GAGNON



M. CULLEN



HORATIO WALKER



J. W. MORRICE



A. SUZOR-COTÉ

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figures of natural cheerfulness and contentment, qualities largely absent from studies by the great Frenchman.

Homer Watson exhibited, in 1909, "Pioneers Crossing the River," which preserved the sense of vigour and simplicity in which the builders of Ontario travelled and worked. It showed a four-horse conestoga fording a stream at sunset, making its way to a camp fire in the woods. Watson's romantic treatment of trees for which he was sometimes called "the Canadian Constable," an analogy first suggested by Oscar Wilde, always was individual and suitable for the rugged Canadian outdoors.

Curtis Williamson had received a thorough training in Europe, and for years his subjects, such as cottage interiors, reflected that early environment. Later he embarked on figure painting and portraits, often in low key, but always with fine drawing, colour and characterization. Williamson's high place has been attained by such painstaking and colourful pictures as "The Woman in Red," "The Cynic" (a portrait of Dr. J. M. MacCallum, with elements of caricature), and a portrait of Sir William Mulock for Osgoode Hall.

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Archibald Browne is a landscapist of poetic impulse, and loves the mystery of twilight or night. He sometimes paints Indian summer, and his pictures possess a quality that invites contemplation. He is a poet in paint, as Thomas Gray, kinsman of his father, was a poet in words. Edmund Morris, Secretary and unofficial manager of the Club, painted many heads of Indian chiefs in a dashing Impressionistic manner and also occasional landscapes. The works of William Brymner, Maurice Cullen, Franklin Brownell, J. W. Morrice, John Russell, and J. Kerr Lawson were also seen at the Art Club, which was likewise the means of introducing Clarence A. Gagnon, of Montreal, to a wider audience. Gagnon rose quickly to a commanding place as a painter of the Quebec landscape. Old houses and village scenes, sleighs *en route* to market over the St. Lawrence in winter, were rendered with fine sentiment and delicacy of tone. "Winter Ice Racing in Canada," reproduced as frontispiece for this work, is one of Mr. Gagnon's characteristic happy studies from French-Canada. W. E. Atkinson brought from France the influence of the Barbizon

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environment, and continued to paint pastoral scenes with twilight mystery and fine feeling.

One reaction from the Art Club's formation was renewed life in other organizations, and the thrusting of several workers to the front. F. H. Brigden, who had begun with the Toronto Art Students' League, refined his technique and later took a foremost place among Canadian water colour painters. His pictures of the poetic valleys of old Ontario, the rugged hills of Algoma and the Lake Superior shore, invariably are distinctive in any exhibition. W. St. Thomas Smith, also a water colourist, caught the restless ocean, the animated skies of a tempest and the ominous brooding of storm clouds. Harry Britton had entered on a long career as a painter of harbours and shipping, with a fondness for the deep colours and languid sails of European ports. Carl Ahrens continued to impart a romantic flavour to his woodland interiors.

Older Ontario pastoral scenes found happy interpreters in Fred S. Haines, since 1928 Curator of the Toronto Art Gallery, and Herbert S. Palmer, Secretary of the Ontario Society of Artists, since 1926. Both

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have turned occasionally to mural decorations with luxuriant colour, while Mr. Haines is also a worker in colour prints. J. E. Sampson, fresh from European study, worked with a dash on figures, and occasionally landscapes. W. D. Blatchly was nearing the end of an industrious life devoted to peaceful rural landscapes in water colour. T. G. Greene, who had been one of the founders of the Carlton Studies, London, in 1903, displayed a preference for shore scenes and pastures. André Lapine is best known by his studies of horses, which he often paints with a fanciful flavour. T. W. Mitchell had begun his interpretations of backwoods farms, which he renders with opulent colour. J. L. Graham developed his own field as a painter of farm animals. George Chavignaud was rendering Canadian landscapes, east and west, in water colour.

Arthur Heming, one of a notable group of artists born at Hamilton, had returned from a career as an illustrator in New York. From the age of seventeen he had been selling his pictures to periodicals in Canada, the United States, England, France and Germany, his principal theme being Canadian wild life,

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which he had studied on scores of visits to the North and West. Much of his data was later embodied in books which he wrote and illustrated, including *Drama of the Forest*. These paintings, predominating in vivid yellow and black, have a decorative quality of Japanese prints, being, at the same time, authentic illustrations of the text and supplementary to it. In 1930, at the age of sixty, he began to paint in full colour, with strong dramatic effects. Another illustrator was Henri Julien, staff artist for the *Montreal Star* for many years before his death, in 1908. In addition to rendering with great truth the news happenings of the day, he painted with fine comprehension some of the legends of French-Canada.

In the field of design, A. H. Howard, a pioneer in that department of Canadian art, found worthy successors in A. Scott Carter and Gustav Hahn. Mr. Carter's greatest work is the painting of the coats-of-arms of the leading universities of the world for Hart House, Toronto.

Among the rising painters of Montreal, F. S. Coburn had attracted attention by his illustrations for Dr. W. H. Drummond's dialect poetry on the *habitant* types of French-

CANADIAN ART

Canada. He was to earn his laurels later chiefly by sparkling winter pictures of logging camps. A. H. Robinson and C. W. Simpson, painting broadly and understandingly, were rendering harbour and street scenes. Simpson, in 1929, began a series of pastels of United States cities for the *Ladies Home Journal*. Percy F. Woodcock was painting the Canadian landscape after the poetical manner of Corot. H. Ivan Neilson, who later became Principal of the Fine Arts School at Quebec, was an etcher of distinction as well as a landscape painter. In Ottawa, Ernest G. Fosbery had launched on a career which led to marked recognition in portraiture. In western Canada, C. J. Collings, a resident of the Shuswap Lake region, since 1910, continued to deserve the high reputation he had won in England as a water colourist in landscape. John Innes, for years a newspaper artist, first in Toronto and later in New York, turned to pictures of early Western history. He has produced many spirited drawings of pioneer life on the prairies, while, working in pen and ink drawings, he has recorded many of the outstanding incidents of British Columbia history. A series of Innes' historical mural paintings,

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dealing with the period of discovery and settlement, has been placed in the Library of the University of British Columbia. Thomas W. Fripp began zealously to paint the Rocky Mountains.

The new impulse indicated by the organization of the Art Club was evident in other directions through heartening signs and sounds. As the prairies were filling, trade expanding and wealth accumulating, public taste showed new refinement. Home builders in Toronto's Rosedale, in Ottawa's Rockcliffe and on Montreal's mountain slopes, called for decorations of a more decided Canadian character. The dominance of the steel engraving in homes of refinement was passing. Art schools were mooted, art exhibitions became more frequent in response to public demand, and government collections assumed a new value in encouraging artists and as guides to connoisseurs.

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VII. Discovery of the Northland

The new stirring can first be traced in the fresh attention given by painters to the Northland. Jacobi and O'Brien had seen

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the promise of those lonely hills and forests, lakes and waterfalls, and there had been a rediscovery of their grandeur by members of the Art Students' League in the nineties, but it remained for the new painters, from 1910 onward, to realize fully the pictorial possibilities of the back country. J. W. Beatty, abandoning the Dutch themes of his student days, revealed to Ontario painters the glories of Algonquin Park, as yet little more than a vacant square on the map. When his pictures, "The Prospector," with a lonely canoeist on a speeding river, and "The Evening Cloud of the Northland," were hung at the O. S. A. exhibition, in 1910, together with "Lineman in New Ontario," by C. W. Jefferys, a new day was beginning to dawn. A. Y. Jackson and Franz Johnston were soon sketching in the northern woods, returning with striking impressions of the solemn forest and the blazing Aurora. Here was change indeed from the sedate, orderly streets and well-groomed farms and gardens of older Ontario.

Tom Thomson, in his short life of forty years, tragically ended by drowning in Algonquin Park, in 1917, was influential in founding what is called the new school of

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Canadian art. Thomson was a true child of the wilds. After a boyhood spent by the blue waters of Georgian Bay, he practised commercial art in Toronto, the while he longed for outdoor life. He was always a shy man, unschooled in city ways, and ever pined for the freedom of the North. He became a guide, forest ranger and sketcher in the lumber country, returning for winter months to his shack studio in the Rosedale ravine in Toronto.

Thomson's pictures rang true; they were convincing records of wind-blown forests, scudding clouds and lakes in tempest, of the patterns of trees as nature made them, not as they were manicured by a city gardener. Thomson always possessed a sense of form, rhythm, tone and colour, and much of this he owed to the exacting demands of high-class commercial art and the mastery he acquired of lettering and design. City-pent artists rose in adoration of his pictures, and since his death he has become almost a tradition through his continuing influence.

In the summer of 1912 Thomson painted "A Northern Lake," with crisp, sparkling blue water, broken by short wave caps, the

CANADIAN ART

whole canvas vibrating with life and light. He sent it to the Ontario Society of Artists' exhibition in the following March, his first public offering, and it was promptly bought by the Ontario Government. "Blue Lake," "A Northern River," "The Jack Pine," "West Wind" and others followed, as Thomson completed them in his remaining short years. Soon the artist had a circle of admirers who watched for his work, which always was fresh in colour and strong in design, consistent with the face of a nature that swiftly changed from violent tempest to beautiful peace.

A significant incident occurred in 1916, when J. E. H. Macdonald, since 1929 Principal of the Ontario College of Art, created a mild sensation by "The Tangled Garden," at the O. S. A. It was a massive Impressionistic treatment of an old garden, with drooping sunflowers and other old-fashioned plants in irregular arrangement. The departure from conventional lines in garden pictures, the vigour and breadth of the painting, aroused warm discussion, but in less than ten years "The Tangled Garden" itself was considered tame and conventional in the

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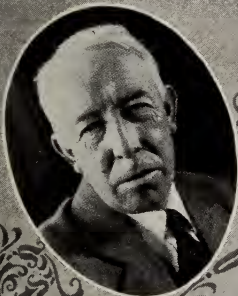
light of changing methods. Canadian art was on the march at home, as Canadian soldiers were aflame with the fervor of war duty in France.



VIII. The Group of Seven

This leads to a consideration of the Group of Seven, a new organization which, in 1920, faced the world with an exhibition in Toronto that challenged older methods and aroused a furore of controversy. Failure of the dust of debate to settle brought a vitalized interest, as well as division into rival schools of art, and exerted an influence on many of the younger workers.

The origin of the new idea is somewhat obscure so far as Canada is concerned, but the strong emphasis laid on design seems related to the poster fashion in pictures in Europe since *L'Art Nouveau* took form in the late nineties. Another influence toward strong light and colour was the Scandinavian art display at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. There are now signs of partial reconciliation, for the Group of Seven exhibition of 1930 included solicited works which were



A. Y. JACKSON



C. F. COMFORT



TOM THOMSON



LAWREN HARRIS



E. H. HOLGATE

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relatively conservative. On the other hand, the manner of several more conservative painters has veered toward modernism.

The writer, perhaps, cannot do better than quote from his own description of the 1922 exhibition of the Group of Seven when he said, in the *Toronto Globe*:

There is no mistaking the work of the members of the Group of Seven. Their self-imposed isolation, their enunciation of their ideas as "pattern" rather than "atmosphere," their frequently heavy technique, their indifference to what is called "sweet," or "pretty," or conventionally acceptable, mark them out at all times. Other artists study their work with mixed sentiments of criticism and admiration, recognizing their vitality and admiring their courage; finding here a strong point and there one from which to differ. They are pioneers, and perhaps they are speaking a language that others will speak tomorrow; but perhaps also they will exercise influence, and be influenced in turn until a more common ground is reached.

No better statement of the Group's point of view is necessary than the following from their own catalogue Foreword:

"New material demands new methods, and new methods fling a challenge to old conventions. It is as impossible to depict the autumn pageantry of our northern woods with a lead pencil as it is to bind our new art with the conventions and methods of other climes and other ages. The thought of to-day cannot be expressed in the language of yesterday. The

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Victorians seem dull and the Elizabethans frigid to a generation with its own problems. Artistic expression is a spirit, not a method; a pursuit, not a settled goal; an instinct, not a body of rules. In the midst of discovery and progress, of vast horizons and a beckoning future, art must take to the road and risk all for the glory of a great adventure."

Armed with such a bill of rights, the visitor may examine the sixty-odd pictures, realizing that he is in unfamiliar environment, and listening to voices that speak a somewhat different language. For one thing, these pictures are all Canadian in subject, but as that alone does not make Canadian art, it must be quickly added that the method is imbued with virility, hardiness and, generally, simplicity—qualities which are supposed to belong to this country. Some of the pictures merely show barren rocks, others, desolated, fire-swept areas or spruce-covered islets of Georgian Bay, while some are pretty patterns from the branches of slender trees in spring or autumn.

Since those opening years, the works of the Group of Seven have been shown far and wide, usually exciting admiration or criticism, but seldom indifference. Lawren Harris, unofficial head of the Group, after exhibiting expressive records of old Toronto houses, turned to painting landscapes in rhythms; still later he became a stylist, abandoning all realism in favor of design. A young Canadian poet of 1930, Miss Elsie

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Aylen, thus described the pattern of a Harris picture, "Above Lake Superior":

Fold on fold, long clouds wind shroud-like on
the heavens,
Unbroken, ominous.

A. Y. Jackson, first a sombre realist as he recorded Quebec villages and the Algoma wilderness, subsequently presented the Arctic mountains in rolling rhythms. Arthur Lismer paints more loosely and ruggedly than Harris or Jackson, but always imparts dignity to his landscapes. Lismer, J. E. H. MacDonald and F. Horsman Varley have in later years turned largely to educational work. A. J. Casson and Frank Carmichael provide a distinctive Canadian note in water colour, with a frequent fine decorative quality in the tree patterns of the former. Edwin H. Holgate, of Montreal, who joined the Group in 1930, is an expert draughtsman and a devoted painter of French-Canadian houses and types.

Little change in personnel or modification in manner, has occurred. There are no officers, no rules, no regular meetings, but usually an annual exhibition, marked by a certain unity of ideas, courage, vigour and experimental intention. Displays arranged

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by the Group in the United States and England have attracted considerable notice, and one of A. Y. Jackson's pictures, "Halifax Harbour," a compelling transcript of Canadian breezy outdoors, was bought for the Tate Gallery, London.



IX. Women Painters

It may be more convenient than discreet to segregate the women painters of Canada in this brief survey. Only one woman has reached the honour of Royal Canadian Academician, Mrs. Charlotte M. B. Schrieber, one of the founder members. She was a cultivated English woman, born in 1834, who spent the middle part of her life on a farm near Toronto, where she recorded freely the pastoral scenes about her. Women have received more official hospitality from the Ontario Society of Artists, which admits them to its Council. Sydney Strickland Tully, who was connected with the famous Strickland family, painted portraits and landscapes for many years in Toronto. Mary Heister Reid, born in 1859, was a painter of home gardens, flowers and land-



F. CARLYLE



EMILY CARR



MRS. SHREIBER



E. WYN WOOD



LILIAS NEWTON

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scapes, and shared the enthusiasm of her husband, George A. Reid, for the development of art in Canada.

Elizabeth McGillivray Knowles painted miniatures and landscapes, and in later years created a unique niche for herself by interpreting the moods of barnyard fowl. Clara S. Hagarty has happily set down the glories of Ontario garden flowers. Marion Long is successful in figure studies of Canadian types of workers. Laura Muntz Lyall endows childhood with romance in pleasant portraits. Mary Wrinch Reid, painting over her maiden name of Mary E. Wrinch, began in miniatures and later turned energetically to landscapes from French-Canada and northern Ontario. Dorothy Stevens is an accomplished etcher and a painter of dash and freshness, especially in figures.

Some of the women painters, such as H. Mabel May, Kathleen M. Morris, Emily Coonan and Liliás Torrance Newton, of Montreal, and Florence H. McGillivray, of Ottawa, have felt the influence of the modern movement, and tend to emphasize design in their work. Mrs. Newton's portraiture is already distinguished. Helen G. McNicoll, of Montreal, painted outdoor subjects with

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a mastery of light and air. Elizabeth S. Nutt, of Halifax, brings to Nova Scotia the methods of her thorough English training, and paints with delightful colour. Estelle Kerr, Toronto, has been a popular illustrator, and in figure painting shows a highly decorative sense. Minnie Kallmeyer paints landscapes and marines with facility. Stella Grier has quickly taken a place by her fresh and distinctive portraits. Emily Carr, of Victoria, exerts her individuality through designs based on totem poles and other Indian *motifs*.



X. Sculpture

Sculpture is sometimes described as the "Cinderella of the arts." Undoubtedly it is an art with limited patronage, especially in a country so young as Canada, where bronzes have been made chiefly for memorial purposes. The nineteenth century was well advanced before modern sculpture attained a lasting foothold in the Dominion. During the eighties F. A. T. Dunbar pioneered in Ontario, and is best remembered by his life-size bust of Sir John A. Macdonald, which

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was widely circulated through reproductions. Hamilton MacCarthy, Ottawa, has had a long career in making statues of public men and war memorials.

The first Canadian sculptor of note was Philippe Hébert, of Montreal, an Acadian by descent, who commenced his long career by modelling the de Salaberry monument erected at Chambly, in 1881. Hébert possessed the warmth and gusto of the Latin races, and his ardent figures and groups contrast with the more restrained efforts of his contemporaries. Hébert's work may be found across Canada, from the Atlantic to the prairies. His memorials for Maissonneuve, Jeanne Mance and Bishop Bourget, in Montreal, Bishop Laval, in Quebec, and the South African War equestrian group at Calgary, especially reveal the fine form, true historical basis and warm decorative quality of his creations.

A. Suzor Coté's bronzes are usually small, for indoor use, but they are spirited, often emotional and ever genuine impressions of French-Canadian types. Alfred Laliberté has followed in the wake of Hébert in modelling historical figures, with a leaning toward dramatic arrangement. G. W. Hill and Elzear Soucy are later Montreal sculptors

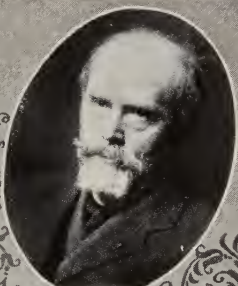
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with some success in memorial work. Henri Hébert, son of Philippe Hébert, though his "Evangeline" at Grand Pré reveals strong sentiment, later showed the modern influence in the imaginative and decorative qualities of his bronzes. One of his best achievements is the Great War memorial at Outremont, Que.

Toronto's outstanding sculptor is Walter S. Allward, who, after modelling a few busts and figures of frock-coated statesmen, suddenly stepped to a new level by his great shaft for the South African War erected in his own city in 1910. The base group of this memorial delicately and strongly expresses, through the figures of a mother and two soldier sons, the sense of duty felt by loyal Canadians. His Baldwin-Lafontaine group, on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, is a happy solution of a difficult problem in portraiture. The Bell Memorial, erected at Brantford in 1917, for the inventor of the telephone, indicated the sculptor's artistic progress and his increasing use of imagination. In 1922 Mr. Allward received a commission to create Canada's national war memorial on Vimy Ridge, in France, marking the scene of a great battle in the World War. This design



W. S. ALLWARD



HENRI HÉBERT



TAIT MCKENZIE



BY LALIBERTÉ



BY ALLWARD

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is a still more imaginative conception, and is regarded as the pinnacle of Allward's career and one of the leading war memorials of the world.

A new society was formed by Canadian sculptors, in 1928, and among the active members was Emanuel Hahn, who had studied for a time with Allward. He has been a teacher of sculpture at the Ontario College of Art, has modelled several memorial works, such as the figure of Edward Hanlan at Toronto, and leans to modern ideas in his later efforts. His latest undertaking is a memorial to Sir Adam Beck, in which the force of Ontario water power is well symbolized. Elizabeth Wyn Wood is even more pronounced in her modernism, with new striking and brilliant results in "Passing Rain" and "The Gesture."

Two other Toronto women sculptors are Frances Loring and Florence Wyle, natives of the United States. While both have designed important war monuments, they are best known by small bronzes, perpetuating munition makers and other workers with a fine feeling for rhythm and the dignity of labour. Alfred Howell, who came to Toronto from England and later removed to

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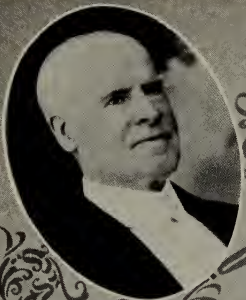
Cleveland, Ohio, was a teacher and the creator of several war memorials in Canadian cities. His group at Guelph happily combines realism and imagination in expressing pride and sorrow. Charles Marega, who went to Vancouver from Italy, is best known as the sculptor of the President Harding memorial in Stanley Park in that city.

On the other hand, Canada was the birthplace of several distinguished sculptors who located in the United States. A. Phinister Proctor has specialized in modelling wild animals, and many of his works have prominent places in American cities. Dr. R. Tait McKenzie's figures of athletes are instinct with rhythm and the joy of wholesome sport. The high quality of his noble figure of Wolfe, at Greenwich, England, the war memorials at Almonte, Ont., his birthplace, and at Edinburgh and Cambridge is widely recognized.

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XI. Etchings and Caricature

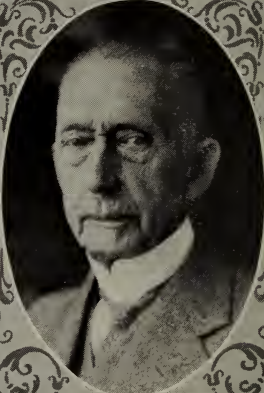
Etchings and engravings, with their delicacy of line and tone, have won new friends in Canada as art technique developed,



J. W. BENGOUGH



W. J. PHILLIPS



SAM HUNTER



HERB. RAINE



A. G. RACEY

CANADIAN ART

though rarely affording subsistence for the creating artist. W. J. Thomson was an early exponent of dry point, Clarence A. Gagnon was celebrated in that field before turning seriously to painting, Stanley Harrod, W. W. Alexander, Owen Staples, Gyrth Russell, John Cotton, H. Ivan Neilson, Herbert Raine, Dorothy Stevens and Caroline Armington have devoted considerable time to the same medium. Mr. Raine, though an architect, became an Academician through the merit of his etchings, particularly of old buildings in French-Canada. Colour prints have new zealous exponents in later days, especially in W. J. Phillips and Fred S. Haines.

Although caricature has not been a continuous element in Canadian art, it has been conducted at times with distinction. Brigadier-General George Townshend, who took part in the capture of Quebec in 1759, left some merciless drawings of General Wolfe, his superior officer, which throw light on the spirit of the times and the acrimony in the officers' camp. During the seventies of last century J. W. Bengough was one of the founders of *Grip*, in Toronto, a comic weekly, in which public men were exposed to good-

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natured ridicule. Mr. Bengough later was cartoonist for the Toronto *Globe*, when he was specially effective in pillorying the members of the declining Conservative Government, in the early nineties. Sam Hunter, who served in turn the *World*, the *Globe* and the *Star*, in Toronto, often happily adapted an outdoor setting or allusion in making his point. In later years James A. Frise has established a niche for himself by his "Birdseye Center" humorous drawings in the Toronto *Star Weekly*. The works of A. G. Racey, cartoonist of the Montreal *Star* since 1898, are widely copied because of the knowledge and imagination which they signify. Owen Staples and George Shields, at different periods brought ready allusion and a bright touch to their cartoons for the Toronto *Telegram*. Alb. Bourgeois, of *La Presse*, is the leading French-Canadian cartoonist.

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XII. A Half-Century of Progress

Half a century since the founding of the Academy has witnessed a startling change in the position and attainments of Canadian art. Ambitions voiced by Lord Lorne have been in a large measure realized. Immediately after

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the Great War a forward movement was visible. Metaphorically, Canadian art stepped out into the world at large at the first British Empire exhibition, in London, in 1924. Recognition then won brought honour abroad and confidence at home. The London *Times* published this typical criticism:

Emphatic design and bold brushwork are the characteristics of the Canadian section; and it is here in particular that the art of the Empire is taking a new turn. The influence suggested is that of Russia—as exemplified by such painters as Roerich—but it is likely that the effect is due chiefly to a certain similarity in the landscape of the two countries. At any rate, there can be no question that Canada is developing a school of landscape painters who are strongly racy of the soil.

Other comments favoured the freshness and vigour of the decorative painters, especially Tom Thomson and Lawren Harris, while the high quality of more conservative workers such as Horatio Walker and J. W. Morrice was also recognized. The reaction in Canada was an immediately freshened interest by picture buyers and the general public. The Trustees of the National Gallery of Canada said in 1925:

There is no longer any reasonable doubt that Canadian art has reached a position of growth and

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excellence which cannot be ignored. In portrait and landscape painting, in decorative design of all kinds, and in sculpture to perhaps a lesser extent, she has won merit and approval in one of the most critical audiences in the world. There is very much reason to hope from such a reception. It cannot fail to stimulate Canadian artists to put forth greater efforts and, if it has the same effect upon the so-called art-lover and at any rate the potential purchaser, the future of Canadian art is assured. . . . No nation was ever a great one that had not a great art.

A year later the Trustees observed a new movement by Canadian painters and commercial designers to capture a larger share of the home market. Importations were no longer to dominate the picture galleries.

Further significant recognition came in 1927 when an exhibition was held in Paris, the art capital of the world. Press critics took the work seriously and sought to interpret it for French readers. *Le Matin* gave this sympathetic comment:

We find here great attainments, some of which owe something to the culture of the *Rue Buonaparte* and *Montparnasse*, but generally the Canadian painters have returned to their own country and there matured in its glorious climate, so marvellously exuberant in all seasons, which make Canada the whitest, the bluest, the greenest, and perhaps the most beautiful country in the world. This is the impres-

CANADIAN ART

sion that strikes one at first glance, and it is further confirmed by the attraction one feels for the landscapes.

While Canada drew freely from other lands in the early stages of her art development, there was a reverse movement in later years. Early instances such as Peel, Bruce and Morrice, have already been mentioned. Charles Alexander (Charles Alexander Smith, born at Galt), who settled in London, was the painter of the superb "Five Counties Meeting," a moving record of a Papineau rebellion incident in the Richelieu Valley, in 1837. This was executed for the Quebec government in the early nineties and hangs in the Quebec Parliament Buildings. F. A. Verner made sketches of the disappearing buffalo in the third quarter of the last century, and rendered prairie frontier life in many paintings, before his death in London, in 1928. J. Kerr Lawson has also long been a resident of London. Jay Hambidge, a native of Ontario, made a stir in New York for years as the advocate of the "dynamic symmetry," a system in design. James Blomfield, back from Chicago, paints West Coast life poetically. Arthur Crisp went from Hamilton to New York and became distinguished as a mural painter. His decorations

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in the new Parliament Buildings at Ottawa, and his commission, begun in 1930, of eighteen panels for the new Canadian Bank of Commerce building in Toronto, have been among his important undertakings. Ernest Lawson is a native of Nova Scotia living in New York, whose Impressionistic landscapes, once counted radical but now conservative, are found in many important collections. John Cotton, etcher and painter of mountains, and George Thomson, who excels in winter landscapes, are Canadian painters who have returned to their native land in recent years.

John Russell, spending his professional life mostly in Paris, paints figures, still life and landscapes with brilliancy. Though detached from his native land, he always commands a hearing by his mastery of his art. His portrait of Sir Wilfrid Laurier was purchased by the National Gallery of Canada. Frank Armington, painter of Impressionistic landscapes, is another resident of Paris, as is also Clarence A. Gagnon in later years. Katherine E. Wallis, sculptor, and R. F. Logan, etcher, live in Paris; and Gyrrh Russell, etcher and landscape painter, a native of Halifax, has made his home in England.

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XIII. The New Generation

Stimulated by the spread of general education and culture, the establishment of new art schools, the increased demand for native art, as well as for pictorial advertising, both painting and illustrating in Canada have assumed an enhanced position in recent years. New workers constantly appear, and new appraisals are made necessary. This survey may suitably conclude with allusions to the painters of more recent accomplishment.

At Toronto the Ontario College of Art has exerted a considerable influence in recent years, both among native Canadians and new arrivals from other lands. Peter C. Sheppard is a vigorous painter of the life about him, especially in harbour and winter scenes. Manly E. McDonald has done distinctive work in landscapes, marines and figures. F. N. Loveroff, a native of Russia, paints vigorous trees, and L. A. C. Panton, born in England, inclines to modernism in his robust landscapes and marines. High standards are being maintained in portraiture by such an artist as Kenneth Forbes, painter of exquisite women. Allan Barr's

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chief success has been in military figures. Charles McGregor and Joshua Smith are recent arrivals from Great Britain, already trained in British schools.

Thoreau MacDonald's black and white drawings reveal a facile young artist, while his book designs and decorations are attracting general interest. Charles Comfort executes daring figure studies, sometimes with a touch of the grotesque. Bertram Brooker has shown individuality in abstract drawings, and J. W. McLaren indulges in racy caricature in oil and pen drawings.

At Montreal, Randolph S. Hewton has raised the current average in figures and portraits of distinction. Robert Pilot has given new freshness, crispness and dignity to the St. Lawrence shore line by his Quebec winter pictures. Charles Maillard specializes in portraits and figures with an occasional turn to landscapes. Paul Caron favours historical buildings. W. M. Barnes paints vigorous landscapes, and Charles de Belle has a field of his own in pastel portraits of children. Prudence Heward, winner of the Willingdon prize in 1929, and George D. Pepper, of Ottawa, winner of the prize in 1930, are moderns of uncommon promise.

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Another young Ottawa artist of individuality is Paul Alfred (A. E. Meister) with a strong preference for landscapes in high key. André Bieler has quickly commanded attention by his figure studies from rural Quebec.

Western Canada, with new art schools and art societies, has a young group of painters. W. J. Phillips, of Winnipeg, has an international place as a maker of colour block prints, as well as a painter of landscapes with exquisite touch. L. L. Fitzgerald, also of Winnipeg, exhibits an individual note in his modernistic landscapes and murals. James Henderson, of Qu'Appelle, glorifies alike the prairie landscape and the sagacity of Indian Chiefs.

Canadian art, surviving the discouragements of limited patronage and keen competition from older countries, has proved its right to live. While clinging to fundamentals, our painters have advanced with the times. Accepting the best from the Impressionists, and sometimes flirting with the Modernists, they have never yielded to the claims of the extreme radicals. Presenting the glories of the Canadian landscape with increasing style and beauty, their portraits

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reveal a growing sensitiveness of understanding and often deep penetration. Authentic art in Canada has the robust virtues of the frontier; there is no place for the vagaries of exoticism or the weary subtleties of sophistication, and no inclination toward the lewd or the unwholesome. Canadian art chronicles the spirit and enterprise of a young country; already critical opinion in New York, Washington, London and Paris has pronounced that record authentic and truly national.

□

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